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**THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT OF THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY AND
JAPAN'S NEW SECURITY STRATEGY**

BY

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**The Security Environment of the Asia Pacific Region at the beginning of the 21st
Century and Japan's New Security Strategy**

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ABSTRACT

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After the end of the Cold War, a great number of changes occurred in the Asia Pacific region, not only politically and economically, but also within the security environment. In some ways, the end of the Cold War has not been as kind to the Asia Pacific region as it was to most of Europe. However, it is obviously moving towards a new dimension.

For Japan's security strategy to cope with those changes, long range planning and more drastic changes are needed. This paper will evaluate strategic changes in the coming new century and to discuss effective measures to facilitate the peace and stability stressing the significance of the Japan-U.S. security relationship, and a possible security framework for the region. Finally, I will discuss Japan's new security strategy, its basic concepts and the role of the Japan's Self Defense Forces.

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PREFACE

The Asia Pacific region has been changing. Since the end of the Cold War, countries all over the world have been working to rebuild or revise their national security systems in accordance with the new geopolitical environment. Asia Pacific countries have also been trying to create their own security system. Over the period spanning from the late 19th century through the 20th century, Asian countries have, in various ways, attempted to respond to the fierce eastward surge of Western civilization, precipitating turbulent change within the region.

The U.S. led the Western countries to victory in the Cold War. Though the U.S. is not without its own domestic problems, its national strength is sustained by the abundance of vitality it possesses as a youthful nation of just a little over 200 years old. There is no sign that the U.S.'s rich endowment of natural and human resources, capital, technological prowess, strength of governance and other attributes will decline in the coming century. The next steps that must be taken in Asia Pacific countries at the threshold of the 21st century will be within a regional landscape that unavoidably has as its basic setting a schism between the cluster of free democratic nations.

The 20th century can be regarded as an era of war and revolution. So, how might the 21st century develop? If we or the next generations would like to call it to the "era of cooperation, peace and prosperity", how do we create a new security strategy to support this? In the future, it will be clear that military organization will play a very important role. Therefore, I would like to study the future strategic environment in the Asia Pacific region, especially East Asia, and try to address what favorable measures and what role Japan must play to accomplish the stable environment.

The Security Environment of Asia Pacific Region at the beginning of the 21st Century and Japan's New Security Strategy

EVALUATION OF CURRENT SECURITY SITUATION

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AFTER THE END OF THE COLD WAR

Though opinions vary on the exact point when the Cold War ended, almost 10 years have passed since the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Since the end of the Cold War, the geopolitical situation has been shifting fluidly with a close balance between positive stable factors and negative ones. The future situation seems to be unclear and uncertain. However, we have to try to assess this mixed picture.

Stable factors

As a result of the end of harsh confrontation between the East and West, some favorable circumstances have emerged.

First, it is quite unlikely that global military conflicts, including all-out nuclear war, can break out.

Second, we have seen many instances of normalization and establishment of diplomatic relations among neighboring countries following the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. For instance, China normalized diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1989 and the Republic of Korea in 1990. In addition, Vietnam normalized diplomatic relations with China in 1993, and with the U.S. in 1995, which led to Vietnam becoming a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Third, normalization of diplomatic relations and economic development in the region promoted exchanges and interdependence among the regional nations. Naturally, military exchanges developed, which promoted mutual understanding.

Fourth, the function of the United Nations (UN) was broadened in Asia to some extent, and independent regional multilateral organizations, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), were formed. These factors have played an important role in promoting economic development, mutual understanding, and confidence-building measures (CBMs), which have helped to stabilize the region.¹

Unstable factors

While bipolar confrontation between the East and West ended, a number of other power centers developed. Despite the dominance of the U.S.'s military power, which provides a security overlay, new, complex and diverse threats and dangers have emerged. I classify these threats into six categories.

First, the threat of regional conflicts. There are a variety of confrontational factors such as ethnic groups, religions, territories, and natural resources that exist in the Asia-Pacific region. The most serious issues are the Korean Peninsula, the Taiwan Strait and the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea.

Other problems -- the Middle East, the Kashmir issue, Indonesian instability -- pose critical problems for the region as well.²

Second, the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), such as nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) weapons, and their spread are a major causes of instability. The nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan, the provocative launch of the Taepo-dong missile over Japanese territory by North Korea in 1998, as well as the continued suspected development of North Korea's nuclear program, are of great concern to the peace and stability of the region. Furthermore, there is the problem of proliferation of North Korea's long-range missiles and its related technologies to countries in the Middle East. It is not too much to say that proliferation is the most serious threat to the world at present. Not only could the regional military balance be upset, and result in a destabilizing situation leading to regional conflict, but also there are serious concerns that terrorists will gain access to WMD.³

Third, illegal acts of terrorism, drugs, piracy and the threat of influx of refugees are major concerns. There have been several notorious acts of terrorism, such as the occupation of the Japanese ambassador's residence in Peru, the massacre of tourists at an Egyptian tourist area in Luxor, and the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. In recent years, piracy has increased in the South China Sea and the Malacca Strait. Also, various areas in the former Yugoslavia and in some African nations have seen an uncontrollable influx of refugees. Refugees pose not only humanitarian concerns and human rights issues, but also destabilize the area into which the influx occurs.⁴

Fourth, internal social unrest caused by political turmoil and economic difficulties is becoming a serious matter. Economic difficulties affect our security environment greatly. The variations in economic development and capabilities among nations cause differences in the progress of military modernization, which will eventually influence the regional military balance. Furthermore, the possibility of a collapse of a country's system or an outbreak of civil war remains. These crises would likely be the catalyst for major refugee flows.⁵

The fifth threat is an imbalance between the supply and demand of vital resources - energy and food -- in the future. Some experts say this will be the most serious problem in the long term, requiring international solutions.⁶

The last area are a new threat, in areas other than military affairs that have not been experienced so far, i.e. cyber terrorism and environmental problems.⁷ These could cause serious danger and pose a military threat if they are unsuccessfully resolved or handled inadequately.

The security environment in the post-Cold War era will be even more complicated and delicate than that of the Cold War, with some of the challenges mentioned above affecting each other. The nature of these threats and the dangers they encompass range from the non-military, to the gray area between military and non-military, and finally to military issues. Also, these dangers can surface simultaneously at many places around the world. Furthermore, it is sometimes difficult for us to pinpoint where many of the potential dangers reside during peacetime, which complicates and hinders our response.⁸

REGIONAL AND DOMESTIC SECURITY SITUATION

SECURITY ENVIRONMENT IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

Although the course has not been smooth, much progress has been made in the Asia Pacific region's security environment over the past decade. Yet, the end of the Cold War has not been as kind to Asia as it was to most of Europe. Though not officially acknowledged, a lack of trust between nearly all the regional states still characterizes East Asia's security environment. This distrust reflects both the legacy of conflicts dating back centuries as well as uncertainty about future developments. In the near term, potential flash points around the Pacific Rim include the Korean Peninsula, the Taiwan Strait, and the South China Sea. Territorial disputes between Japan and China, Russia and South Korea also persist. Present day distrust further reflects long term fears about regional developments.

Historically, the Asia Pacific region, especially East Asia, has dealt with emerging threats and uncertainties through bilateral arrangements rather than through multilateral cooperation. For example, the U.S. constructed a series of bilateral security ties during the Cold War, including treaties with Japan, South Korea and Australia. Although no longer linked by a formal security treaty, many in Taiwan and some members of the U.S. Congress expect the U.S. would assist Taiwan under certain circumstances. Similarly, although Soviet-era military agreements between Moscow, Beijing, and Pyongyang have lapsed, vestiges of those ties remain.⁹

In contrast to these old security linkages, new economic and political relations have been established among several former adversaries. As a result, a complex set of ties exists, so that change in any one set of relations is likely to reverberate throughout the entire system. Therefore, plans and programs can no longer be developed narrowly in terms of a single problem without anticipating broader effects to the entire security community.

Such a security community is necessary for long-term peace and stability in the Asia Pacific region. It should be pursued through negotiations and cooperative activities based on mutual interests. Stable security relies on shared rules and norms, which are codified by way of extensive consultations and institutionalized dialogue. Confidence-Building Measures can mitigate the inherent limitations of relying solely on bilateral alliances to cope with regional security concerns. Alliances, by their very nature of providing deterrence and defense, can provoke misunderstanding and anxiety among third parties. This also carries with it the possibility of provoking an arms race.¹⁰

JAPAN'S DOMESTIC SITUATION --- ESPECIALLY LEGAL ASPECT

Constitutional Constraints

Since WWII, the Japanese government has imposed upon itself a strict prohibition against the right of collective self-defense, maintaining that, although as a sovereign nation it possesses that right inherently, the exercise of this is not permitted by the Japanese constitution.¹¹ This restriction is evidenced in the bill concerning situations in areas surrounding Japan, which limits the support Japan's

Self Defense Forces (SDF) may provide to U.S. forces responding to an emergency around Japan in such activities characterized under the heading of "rear area support". This includes logistics support provided only in non-combat areas, according to the Japan-U.S. New Defense Guideline established in 1997.¹²

Based upon the restraint on collective defense rights growing out of the Constitution, the GOJ's stance on exercising the right of collective self-defense has attracted considerable criticism. It has been called logically inconsistent in that it asserts, in effect, that Japan simultaneously has and does not have this right. Some argue that it is incongruent with the prevailing international climate of increasing interdependence and the need for more balance between the burden and benefits of defense cooperation. Other people are calling for a rigorous debate that would include the prospect of relaxing regulations on the exercise of the right of collective self-defense. Many people think that Japan should even consider amending its constitution. With each year, support for such views increase, particularly among the younger generation of Japan's leaders. One testimony to this trend is the considerable progress made in the drafting of a Diet members' bill for the establishment of a standing committee to review the Constitution.

There remains, however, considerable conservative support in Japan for the "right which cannot be exercised" view, and this inhibits reform. Many of the reasons given against relaxing the regulations governing Japan's right to exercise self-defense are largely emotional and irrational in nature, such as that it would adversely provoke other countries in the East Asia, that neighboring nations would protest, or simply that there is no reason to change the stance Japan has maintained on the issue for so long. Those who support this conventional view, however, are rapidly dwindling in number.¹³

It has also been argued that, if Japan were prepared to exercise its right of collective self-defense, it would have no choice but to be drawn into other countries' wars. This view is devoid of any objective basis in international law or in treaty convention, and serves only to mislead the Japanese people. The signing of a treaty allowing Japan to exercise its right of collective self-defense would not obligate Japan to exercise its right, nor would it obligate Japan to aid its treaty partner automatically in a contingency. Rather, in accordance with customary treaty provisions giving each signatory autonomous control over whether or not it will cooperate in the circumstances at hand, Japan would remain free to use its best judgement regarding how to respond to each specific situation. Under the current Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, for instance, both countries enjoy, via occasional consultations provided for in Article IV of the treaty, the right not to cooperate depending upon the particular circumstances at hand,-an important aspect of the treaty that more and more people are coming to notice.

Problem for crisis management

Recently, Japan has faced serious national crises, not only natural disasters, such as the eruption of volcanoes, the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in January '94 , and the recent nuclear accident at Tokai-mura, but also in the area of low-intensity conflict, such as the sarin gas terrorism attack on Tokyo

subways in March '94, the Taepo-dong missile launch over Japan in August '98, and the incursion into Japanese territorial waters by North Korean spy ships in March '99. These incidents do not constitute a direct military invasion, but nevertheless seriously menace the peaceful life the Japanese citizens have enjoyed so far. For many years, the Japanese people have believed that "fresh water and security are free". Furthermore, they have avoided even thinking about or discussing crises.

The incursion by North Korean spy ships last year especially highlighted the inadequacies of Japan's crisis response, in terms of the national security system, current laws and regulations, decision making, inter-agency cooperation, adequate equipment, etc.¹⁴

The JSDF are prepared to deal with a direct military attack by another country, the threat of such an attack, or domestic strife comparable to civil war, and are capable of fulfilling their duties in these areas. We must be fully prepared, however, to respond quickly to any emergency that may threaten Japan's independence, peace, or security, and to prevent any escalation of such a situation. The primary mission of the SDF remains to defend Japan against direct or indirect aggression, to preserve its peace and independence, and to maintain national security. The SDF will also take charge, if necessary, in maintaining public order. Therefore, it is empowered by law to use force when such action is required to defend the country. In areas where SDF units are deployed, they are also allowed, subject to certain conditions, to expropriate property. Under the current system, however, legislation does not necessarily provide sufficient provisions to deal with these situations.¹⁵ Other areas relating to national security have been entrusted to "police authorities," such as regional police headquarters and the Maritime Safety Agency.

For some time after the end of WWII, Japan left its national security entirely in the hands of the Allied forces, particularly the U.S. The situation remained largely unchanged until around 1954, when the JSDF were established. Even after the Korean War, Japan remained heavily dependent on U.S. forces. A significant change came with the revision of the Japan-U.S. Mutual Security Treaty in 1960, under which the number of U.S. military personnel stationed in Japan was reduced to about 40,000.

The U.S. continued to maintain a forward presence in allied nations in Asia, however, because of the Cold War. As a result, the role of the SDF was limited to "defending the country in times of national crisis due to a direct or an indirect invasion on a large scale" by foreign forces.¹⁶ Thus, the need for SDF contingency operations in peacetime was not considered. After the Cold War, however, Japan now faces new, widespread, complex, and diverse threats and risks, such as regional conflicts. These threats may become serious national crises that must be responded to. We have to pay attention and cope with problems that no one had assumed adequate responsibility for before.¹⁷

Nature of potential crises

Until now, we normally divided crises into two aspects, military and non-military. Coping with military crises, the government, especially the SDF, is prepared to defend the country. On the other hand, a non-military crisis, such as a natural disaster or large-scale accident, has been beyond the

JSDF's purview despite the fact that such incidents have occurred before. Indeed, only after the great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake, the Disaster Relief Law was modified for the SDF to enable it to operate more easily.¹⁸

It is obvious that the systemic security vacuum exposed by recent incidents can be attributed to the lack of preparing for a type of mission that must be undertaken primarily by military force in what is a legally gray area. Illegal intrusion into Japanese territory could jeopardize lives and property even during peacetime. The government naturally has an obligation to do whatever it must to prevent such intrusions. In the wake of such incidents, there has been a debate in the government and the ruling party, as well as in the Diet, concerning what form such operations should take. Views vary widely, however, and a consensus is not expected any time soon.

Existing problems in terms of national crisis response

In many other countries, territorial patrol operations that use military units for deterring and responding to illegal incursions are conducted on a routine, day-to-day basis as an auxiliary duty to the major tasks of the military. Therefore, adding such a mission to the SDF's responsibilities should be supported by the international community as a natural extension of Japan's sovereignty. Conducting such operations would require boosting the capabilities of the SDF, however. Worthy of note is the fact that the Ground Self Defense Force (GSDF) originated in the National Police Reserve Force that was established in 1950.¹⁹ In the same year, expansion of personnel of the Maritime Safety Agency eventually led to the establishment of the Maritime Self Defense Force (MSDF). The Government and Diet left tasks regarding these missions, such as territorial patrol operations, primarily to police authorities as described above. As a result, the criteria governing the SDF's use of weapons have been based on the "Performance of Police Functions Law". This means that SDF members dealing with intrusions that go beyond the limits of police activities are still subject to conditions applied to domestic criminal investigations by police officers. This is hardly reasonable.

Normally, a national crisis happens unexpectedly. Of course, the Government of Japan has studied several cases from the past. The post of "Cabinet Crisis Management Controller" was created in April 1998. The new position calls for the Controller, among other things, to make an initial judgement on measures to be taken by the cabinet in the event of an emergency that is not relevant to the defense of this country, and for coordinating initial measures with concerned ministries and agencies in a comprehensive manner. The SDF, in keeping with the basic objective for which this post was created, tries to plan and maintain close contact with the Cabinet Crisis Management Controller under normal circumstances, as well as in an emergency.

Since these new functions have only been established recently, there is a tendency to concentrate plan for crises that have occurred in the past and that already have an adequate legal basis, such as large scale natural disasters, hijacking, or non-combatant evacuation operations, etc. Consequently, Japan still has inadequate procedures and capabilities to cope with crises within the gray zone. If an

intrusion were perpetrated by foreign terrorists or guerrillas, Japan is not prepared to deal with it. Another mechanism is the Cabinet's "National Defense Conference" consisting of related ministers, but it generally addresses direct and indirect invasion scenarios, not events occurring beyond legal precedence. In sum, since no one is prepared for decision making in these types of crises, it will take many hours to decide what policies are to be adopted.

According to the National Administrative Law, all government ministries and agencies have to cooperate in order to complement each other's functions. However, it is normally very difficult to conduct effective coordination. The problem is that some officials are so narrowly focused on their duties that they become too parochial about their responsibilities. This results in what is called "vertically-split administration," which lacks close-knit relations between each ministry or agency.²⁰ In this situation, it is common that something is only decided after it is sent from one office to another, even if it is not necessary to do so. In a crisis, this method of coordination is ineffective and wastes valuable time.

EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO FACILITATE REGIONAL SECURITY

PERSPECTIVE TO THE 21ST CENTURY

It is very difficult to foresee the future. Probably, nobody can predict future events precisely. Nevertheless, it is important to discuss the future world in order to formulate a set of favorable circumstances in the Asia Pacific region. To prophesize the "Asia Pacific Region of the 21st Century" is too big a topic to be covered here, and is too long a time span. However, the security environment of the first decades of the century is a manageable topic.

As many authorities have stated, the 20th century was unusual. It experienced two hot global wars and one cold one. Also, there were significant political movements, most notably the Russian and Chinese Revolutions. Thus, the 20th century might be defined as "the era of War and Revolution".²¹ On the other hand, the 20th century can also be characterized as an era of worldwide economic development and industrialization.

War, revolution, economic development, industrialization, and social change are the main characteristics the post-modern era from the 19th century onwards. To assess the 21st century, we must determine whether the world can maintain the positive development of the previous 100 years. We have come to an important decision point, whether we can succeed along favorable lanes in the 21st century, or whether we will fail to meet the promise of a new century and the advancement it portends through new technologies and increase in the sum of world knowledge.²² There are also restrictions on what we can do. It is counterproductive to destroy the environment for the sake of development. Therefore, we have to consider two options; that is, the establishment of self-control and mutual restraint, or engage in a scramble to gain resources, which will likely lead to a clash of countries and civilizations.

The first option is a case for success and a "soft landing". The latter will lead to failure and possible conflict. To predict the outcome of the opening decades of the 21st century, I suggest that a study of the present conditions will provide clues for the future.

JAPAN-U.S. SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS IN THE FUTURE

Japan-U.S. political relations, which have been adrift since the collapse of the Soviet Union, now seem to be back on the right track.²³ It would be absurd to treat the relations between the first and second ranked countries in the international economy as if they were at "economic war". Words matter. Political and intellectual leaders of both nations should make every effort to avoid using self-serving and dangerous metaphors to describe Japan-U.S. relations. This is important not only because their objective should be an "exchange of interests" in economic relations but also, and more fundamentally, because the task of building a new structure for peace and prosperity both at regional and global levels requires closer collaboration between Japan and the U.S..²⁴ This is the essence of the "alliance" between Japan and U.S. in the future.

Alliance undoubtedly implies military collaboration in time of crisis. By confirming the continued importance of the alliance in the post -Cold War era, we have to openly acknowledge the need to prepare for contingencies in which some use or show of military force is necessary, either for defense or for deterrence.²⁵

For a long time, Japan has shrugged its shoulders as far as its own security role was concerned. That "standoffish" attitude is apparently changing, however. The Japan-U.S. alliance is the very cornerstone to building the future regional and global order. Alliance can be defined broadly as a community of interests, if the nature or qualities and ,in that sense, its purpose are broader than merely potential military cooperation in time of war. It is the symbol of unity of purpose and cooperation among like-minded nations in their joint efforts to create a new world order.²⁶

Needless to say, the Japan-U.S. security arrangement has made a great contribution to peace, stability, and prosperity, both regionally and throughout the world.²⁷ Japan has few natural resources. In order to keep up its present prosperity, it is essential for Japan not only to continue technological innovation and maintain a free trade system, but also to maintain international markets and to secure sea and air lines of communications for free access to vital resources and trade. In other words, Japan's peace, stability, and prosperity are closely related to those of the Asia-Pacific region as well as the world. There are many unstable factors that require deterrence, however. Many situations threaten the present status quo. We also know that multinational security arrangements are not perfect. Of course, Japan will cooperate as much as possible to maintain regional stability, to prevent the outbreak of a crisis, and to solve a crisis when it occurs, but it is difficult for Japan to take the lead in these activities because of its history and domestic constraints. Therefore, Japan justly expects the U.S. to play the role of an "anchor of stability", because it not only advocates freedom, democracy, a free trade system, interdependent economic relations and many values in common with Japan, but also because it is the only nation in the world that has the capability to deploy and employ comprehensive forces.

The Japan-U.S. security arrangement has contributed to the "defense of Japan", "peace and stability of the region", and "peace and stability of the world".²⁸ Japan and the U.S. are working together steadily to achieve these three goals in cooperation with like-minded countries in the region and the

world. It is generally acknowledged that Japanese and American ideas are compatible with the strengthening of regional and global security arrangements. A firm alliance between the two must be preserved by all means as a critical asset. One may say that an alliance is by definition an exclusive club whose benefits can not be spread to outsiders..The circle can be broadened, however, to include other like-minded partners in informal ways while keeping the exclusive structure of the alliance intact. Having laid down the basic principles of the Japan-U.S. alliance, it is necessary to discuss the more immediate and practical problems that must be confronted.

POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE MULTINATIONAL REGIONAL SECURITY FRAMEWORK

There has been an increasing trend to attempt to formulate to an effective forum for dialogue and cooperation of multinational political and security issues. To date, because of its diversity, Asian-Pacific countries have not been able to share ideas because of differences stemming from race, language, culture, custom, religion, political system, national interest, etc. However, recent advances in economic development and democratization in the last decades of the 20th century have gradually cultivated a sense of greater mutual reliance and integrity.

There is justification to promote regional political/security dialogue among regional neighbors, such as recent regional geopolitical instability and global level problems, such as terrorism, drugs, international crime, environmental problems, natural disasters, food and energy problems, etc. After the Cold War, nation states have explored the potential of multinational cooperation as well as the development of their own national power.

To create an effective regional multilateral cooperative framework, however,, several problems must be solved to cope with the uniqueness of the Asia-Pacific region. The situation in Asia differs greatly from that of Europe.²⁹ Therefore, it might be impossible to apply similar solutions. Three options should be considered for establishing an Asia-Pacific region regional security framework.

First is a comprehensive framework system like OSCE. This arrangement does not incur strict arrangements and duties. Countries are free to enter, and generally are not expected to fulfill military obligations. It is a "soft" community, to discuss and coordinate political and security issues.

Second is a more structured type of organization like the European Union (EU) or Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In this case, a formal treaty or arrangement must be activated, and organizational structures created and operated.

Finally, the strictest option is an organization with a military component under a unified command, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) collective defense system.

Considering the characteristics of the Asia-Pacific region and its historical and geographical aspects, the most favorable solution would be the first or second type of organization. There are several reasons: It would be difficult to gain a common consensus for collective defense and to agree upon common threats or concerns pertaining to all the countries. There are still contentious issues among the countries of the region, such as the territorial problem of the Spratly Islands. Finally, there is a tendency among some member states of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) that prevent them from favorably

opting for multinational negotiations to resolve problems. Thus, there are limitations to both the functions and effectiveness of the current global and regional multinational security arrangement. We have to promote the development of a multinational cooperative framework for peace and security in Asia, however.

As we consider the members to be included in a regional security framework, it is essential to welcome as many countries as possible. Of course, ASEAN, Japan, U.S., South Korea, Australia, China, and Russia would be the main members. Concurrently, North Korea, Taiwan and India should be encouraged to participate in this framework. And, Japan, to demonstrate its leadership, might take the initiative by establishing and coordinating the basic concepts for promoting regional stability in Asia-Pacific region.

SOLVING JAPAN'S POST-WAR LEGACY--- OVERCOMING WORLD WAR II

Has Japan overcome its WWII defeat? Does the trauma of WWII still serve as a drag on Japan? When we consider the issue of security in the Asia-Pacific region, we sometimes encounter this problem. Japan and Germany experienced very similar situations as vanquished nations. Nevertheless, Germany eventually achieved national reunification and overcame the stigma of World War II.³⁰

It seems that Japan has not overcome its wartime legacy, however. For example, Japan has not completed a peace treaty with Russia despite the passage of more than 50 years. Japan has sometimes suffered political and diplomatic attacks, mainly from the PRC and the Korean Peninsula. Thus, Japan remains in the shadow of the war, and has not succeeded in establishing its distinct position in the Asia-Pacific region. This poses problems not only for Japan, but also for related powers such as the U.S., Russia, and the PRC. Especially, the U.S. and Russia (the former the Soviet Union) have failed to establish clear post-war agreements to deal with Asia. Thus, several problems occurred, such as the division of the Korean Peninsula, confrontation between the PRC and Taiwan, etc. Finally, Japan was unable to conclude unresolved aspects of the conflict (e.g. the "Northern territories"), which continues to exist to this day. Of course, Japan has completed all its legally required war reparations. After Japan's successful economic development, however, additional claims over Japan's war responsibilities were raised loudly, especially from the PRC and the Korean Peninsula. Indeed, these countries sometimes attempt to utilize those issues for political and diplomatic leverage against Japan.

Generally, such issues might be solved with the passage of time. In the case of Japan, however they are repeated often, sometimes even exaggerated. I think those issues include both emotional and mercenary motivations.

If Japan would like to become a normal nation state, to contribute to regional and international stability, these problems must be solved. A Japan that is condemned to dwell on its past actions, actions that have no relevance or merit in the context of the future security environment, not only hurts Japan but also penalizes the Asia-Pacific region. Japan should promote its normalization as a developed democratic nation state that will act responsibly to accomplish its international duties. Historically, Japan has played a unique role as the most socio-economically advanced country in the region, competing with

the West on a relatively equal footing. This status as a "member of the club" of modern nations has inspired the belief that Japan's role is to "bridge" the gap between the West and Asia-Pacific region.³¹

Japan cannot avoid the lessons of history, but there must be a "statute of limitations" on war guilt. It is essential that Japan recover from its historical trauma and be allowed to seek its natural role.

COOPERATION BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

It goes without saying that efforts must be made in the future to create a direct security framework between Japan and South Korea. For the time being, however, internal circumstances in both countries, as well as neighboring country considerations, make it desirable to maintain a form of cooperation that links the two countries indirectly through their separate bilateral relationships with the U.S.

Japan-Republic of Korea (ROK) cooperation must take into account what is feasible given the present context of the relationship, and then be expanded gradually, while removing the obstacles to direct cooperation. If such an effort can be sustained, the day may come when conditions will appear to have suddenly changed and, possibly in a single stroke, the scope of Japan-ROK cooperation will fully develop. In fact, there has already been considerable interaction and exchange between the two countries in the field of military affairs. When it comes to actual operations, however, difficulties stand in the way of implementation. Cooperation between ground, maritime, and air units could trigger adverse reactions both domestically and in neighboring countries, resulting in a setback. Such circumstances are subject to change, however. Japan and the ROK should increase opportunities for discussion and implementation of mutual security cooperation. Of course, Japan-ROK cooperation must be coordinated with the U.S. to promote mutual understanding and smooth functioning of the existing security framework.³²

COOPERATION WITH CHINA

When we consider Japan-U.S.-ROK cooperation, the issue of how to treat China cannot be avoided. As a country with one foot planted in a free market economy, China shares some similar characteristics with the region's democratic nations in that it also benefits from the unimpeded use of both ocean resources and sea lines of communications (SLOCs). Given China's position as a nation heavily dependent upon overseas commerce, it should be possible to enlist it as a member in a body of nations that seek tranquil regional relations and security. An effective structure must be established to prevent the rise of any Asian nation as a regional hegemon.³³ It is desirable to move toward the establishment of a system for creating confidence-building measures (CBMs) between Japan, U.S., ROK, China and Russia.

JAPAN'S NEW SECURITY STRATEGY AND THE ROLE OF THE JAPAN GROUND SELF DEFENSE FORCES (JGSDF)

BASIC CONCEPT OF NEW SECURITY STRATEGY

During the post-World War II and Cold War eras, Japan's national security has been defined narrowly, as only the right to cope with a direct invasion under the condition of "the right of individual-defense" based upon the current interpretation of the Constitution. This has prevented a pragmatic and effective approach to cope with the other dangerous situations confronting Japan.³⁴

In the present, uncertain post-Cold War environment, if we still maintain such a concept, Japan will be left out of the creation of a new world order. Thus, it is crucial for Japan to remove the political constraints that have become obstacles for planning a new security strategy. We must create a new framework and policy to include "the right of collective-defense". Consequently, this new strategy will require new guidance to formulate a complementary defense strategy for the JSDF.

For several decades after the establishment of the JSDF, Japan's defense strategy was solely focused on deterrent measures against the Soviet Union.³⁵ However, now Japan should employ a "Flexible Defense Strategy" to cope with the uncertain strategic environment, which might include military operations and operations other than war. Traditionally, Japan has centered its defense strategy around only a wartime scenario. Under present circumstances, it should identify the full range of military options, which the JSDF can bring to bear to accomplish the objectives of a national security strategy. In the future, political considerations and international criticism must be taken account but not act as a permanent obstacle to the attainment of a credible defense strategy.

As for the ground portion of a new defense doctrine to be followed within a national security strategy, the JGSDF must create a new concept to cope with a new age. Until now, it has adhered to and developed a doctrine that might be referred to as "the threat from the North strategy". To implement this doctrine, the JGSDF developed "the defense at the water's edge with concentrated firepower", and "standardized functional and regional organization" concepts.³⁶ These concepts were created based on Japan's strategic appreciation of the Cold War environment. Through it, the JGSDF was able to contribute to U.S. global strategy as a member of the Western Alliance in partnership with the U.S. Indeed, those concepts also had the significant benefit of requiring a modern force structure for ground power, and the requirement to maintain high levels of readiness and training.

However, after the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, those concepts lost their sense of urgency and were not acceptable for what appeared to be a new era of more peaceful relations. To replace the "threat posed by the Soviet Union" with "the threat by Russia" is difficult to explain to the nation. Also, it is very difficult to cope with two different fronts, the Northern (Russia) and Western (China/Korean Peninsula) at the same time because of recent national budget problems and their impact upon the defense budget. Therefore, for the time being, the JGSDF should emphasize the front on Western Japan, and the northern front should be considered a lesser threat, at least temporarily. This

may require major changes in the JGSDF's doctrine. It is time for the it to cope realistically with new geopolitical conditions, however.,

ROLE OF THE JAPAN GROUND SELF DEFENSE FORCES

The JGSDF, although highly mechanized and well equipped through successive defense buildup programs stretching back several years, has not been tested in actual combat. There are several difficulties regarding the terms of its legislative basis, service composition, training, and joint operations, etc.³⁷ These must be solved as soon as possible in order to cope with its new missions. From its inception, it was believed the JGSDF, to maintain peace and security in national, regional and international situations, must stick to the sole security measure of preventing and repelling aggression. This can no longer be the case. The JGSDF must now also formulate and carry out the means necessary for multi-layered security, ranging from peacetime, through periods of contingency, to the post-contingency period.

During the present condition, it is important to capitalize upon international and regional security cooperation through the promotion of CBMs, including security dialogues and defense exchanges, staff talks or conferences, arms control and arms reduction, international arrangements to prevent proliferation of various dangerous weapons and technology, active participation in UN peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance activities, and the strengthening of security arrangements with international organizations.³⁸

These efforts must be accomplished to prevent crises from occurring in the first place. If a crisis occurs despite our best efforts to deter it, we must prevent its escalation by all political, diplomatic, economic and military measures available. We must not allow the crisis to develop into an armed clash or conflict. If we fail to prevent a crisis from escalating, it is critical to settle the situation at the earliest stage possible with quick and precise countermeasures. After conflict termination, we must assist in recovering from the damage quickly and take measures to prevent a reoccurrence.

We must study the future role of military power. The role of military force has sometimes been described as "a hundred-year buildup of forces, which have been desperately conducting hard training as its essential and fundamental role is to defend the homeland, deterring and coping with aggression." There is no change in this essential and fundamental role.

In this new post-Cold War environment, however, the role of the JGSDF is not limited to exercising the right of defending the country. It has now begun to include international actions such as participating in peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations and the joining multinational forces to maintain peace. Furthermore, the nature of these actions is changing to include not only traditional military operations but non-military activities as well, such as large-scale disaster relief operations, environmental preservation, civil community support operations, and operations falling in the gray area between military and non-military operations. These expanded missions will require the enlargement of

the military's role, based upon the JGSDF's high level of capability, the nation's increased trust in the JGSDF as a military organization, and the willingness to use military capabilities in peacetime.

Also, in the future, the JGSDF may be called upon to promote mutual understanding in the field of security by contributing through active participation in peace building for a more stable security environment. This falls under the category of works that only military organizations can accomplish, though not among their central roles. These missions include promotion of mutual understanding through security dialogues and combined training, participation in PKO, Humanitarian Relief Operations (HRO), and promotion of arms control and disarmament.

Needless to say, the JSDF will continue to have the mission to prevent a crisis by playing the key role as executive agent for surveillance and monitoring of turbulent activities and situations. Those activities include observation and surveillance of large-scale military exercises, prevention of conflicts and arms control measures. Missions that prevent the escalation of a crisis, deter military conflict and cope with armed conflict remain the JGSDF's essential and fundamental tasks.

What remains to be defined more clearly is the JGSDF's role and mission with regard to regional security in the Asia-Pacific area. It would only be accurate to say that at this early stage a first step toward a new Japanese security policy has just been taken. At this moment, no one is sure about the final shape of this emerging regional security role and Japan's place in it. What is certain is Japan's growing readiness to involve itself more in security relationships with all countries in the Asia-Pacific region, both in bilateral and multinational ways.

CONCLUSION

As described above, I have tried to discuss how Japan's new security strategy should be established to cope with the security environment of the Asia-Pacific region at the beginning of the 21st century. Since the end of World War II, Japan succeeded by minimizing its defense expenditures under the U.S.-Japan security arrangement and developed its economic power to the point where it has become the second largest economy in the world. Japan has no intention to possess a defense capability commensurate with its economic status, however. Furthermore, Japan, for legal and policy reasons, has been compelled to restrict its legitimate self-defense capabilities.

It is not in Japan's interest, however, for this imbalance between political, economic and military capability to continue. Now is the time for Japan to decide and announce how it will assume its international responsibilities, and what role Japan will play as the leading industrialized nation of the Asia-Pacific region.

For more than 50 years, Japanese politics, diplomacy and defense strategy have been focused on narrow and limited objectives, seeking only non-military solutions to problems. Japan should enlarge its political and military options to cope with new situations, however. Also, the Japan Self-Defense Forces should develop real military capabilities, which will enable them to carry out their missions. Japan must pay scrupulous attention to the state of affairs of the world, develop a vision of the future environment, and apply pragmatism and flexibility to deal with new realities. With a sound strategy and capable military

forces, Japan can fulfill the ultimate goal of any nation as enunciated by Sun Tzu, "Victory without fighting."³⁹

WORD COUNT = 7,082

ENDNOTES

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